

## Secrets to Surviving Life's Storms, Part 1 - Acts 27:1-3 – July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010

- The last two chapters here in the book of Acts, are perhaps amongst the most fascinating and interesting of all the chapters in the Bible.
- The reason that I both believe this and say this is because the detailed information has profound application to us in our lives today.
- As we watch what happens with and to the beloved Apostle Paul, we can't help but learn some invaluable life lessons from his hard life.

- Today will be part one of a series I've titled; "Secrets to Surviving Life's Storms." We're about to discover Paul's secret of success.
- I'm always careful when I use the word success because the world has hijacked the word success and both perverted and distorted it.
- Paul's life as a successful Christian life and I believe the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to include these details for us to learn these secrets.

### 1. Purpose (Verse 1)

1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment.

- v1 Paul, along with other prisoners, were placed under a centurion named Julius of the Imperial Regiment as they set sail for Rome.
- Now, we had just read, in the last verse of the last chapter, that if Paul had not appealed to Caesar, he could have been set free.
- Surely, Paul would have known this, yet as a Roman citizen, he exercised his right to appeal to Caesar knowing he'd end up in Rome.

- Perhaps the question is, "why?" Why would Paul make this appeal in the first place? I believe that there are two reasons he did this.
- First, it was God's purpose for Paul to impact Rome with the gospel so he could impact the world because of Roman rule in the world.
- Second, when the Roman Commander had him taken into protective custody in Jerusalem, the Lord told him that he would go to Rome.

**Acts 23:11** The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome." NIV

### 2. Trustworthiness (Verses 2-3)

2 We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. 3 The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs.

- v2 Luke tells us, though not a prisoner, that he was with Paul onboard as they set sail for the ports along the coast of the Asian province.
- v3 We're told that Julius, out of kindness to Paul, though he's still a prisoner, allows him the freedom to have fellowship with his friends.

- I believe that Luke was allowed to board this ship, and Paul was allowed to have this kind of freedom because of his trustworthiness.
- It's interesting to note that this Centurion had likely just met Paul and couldn't have known about him - unless he was told about him.
- In other words it must have been refreshing to the Centurion to have a prisoner like Paul who actually had integrity and was trustworthy.

**Proverbs 25:13** Like the coolness of snow at harvest time is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him; he refreshes the spirit of his masters. NIV

**Proverbs 11:3** The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity. NIV

- It will be the trustworthiness of Paul that will come into play again when they are shipwrecked. Paul will encourage them to trust God.

"For the sake of one good man all on board the vessel were preserved. May the Lord give to us, also, all who are with us. Paul was accompanied by Luke and other believers, there were also with him the courteous centurion, several prisoners, a crew of rough sailors, and a band of fierce soldiers, and God gave him all that sailed with him. We pray that all our family, our fellow church members, our servants, our neighbors, our work people, and even our enemies, may be saved. Are not our hearts large enough to pray for all? May the Lord give us faith to intercede for them, and what a joy it will be if all shall come safely through the tempests of this life to the shores of heaven! Grant it, O lord! Amen and amen."

Charles Spurgeon